

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 06234 232007Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 6234

LIMDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OTRA, SHUM, PINT, PGOV (TODMAN, TERENCE A.), AR
SUBJECT: DRAFT REPORT OF TODMAN MEETING WITH
ARGENTINE POLITICIANS

REF: BUENOS AIRES 6127

FOLLOWING FOR YOUR CLEARANCE IS AN ACCOUNT
OF YOUR MEETING WITH ARGENTINE POLITICAL
AND LABOR LEADERS.

1. AT FIVE ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON AUGUST 14,
MR. TODMAN MET WITH LEADERS AND FORMER
LEADERS OF THE JUSTICIALISTA, RADICAL AND
POPULAR CHRISTIAN PARTIES, AS WELL AS THREE
MEMBERS OF THE ARGENTINE LABOR MOVEMENT.
LIGHT AND POWER WORKERS UNION CHIEF JUAN
TACCONE MADE AN IMPASSIONED PRESENTATION
REGARDING THE CURRENT SITUATION OF ARGENTINE
WAGE EARNERS, BUT POLITICAL LEADERS MEETING
WITH MR. TODMAN GAVE SOBER AND REFLECTIVE
COMMENTS WHICH EXPRESSED SURPRISING UNANIMITY, IN VIEW
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OF THE FIERCE INTERPARTY BATTLES THAT HAVE BEEN WAGED
IN ARGENTINA'S FAIRLY RECENT PAST.

2. THERE WAS VIRTUAL UNANIMITY, FOR EXAMPLE, IN
POLITICAL LEADERS' FEELING THAT THE TIME IS NOT RIPE
FOR ELECTIONS HERE. ALTHOUGH MORE THAN ONE SPEAKER
REJECTED THE IDEA THAT THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT SHOULD

RULE FOR THE NEXT 12-16 YEARS, NO ONE EXPRESSED THE IDEA OF A PARTICULAR DATE FOR ELECTIONS--EVEN SOMETHING IN THE DISTANT FUTURE. WHAT THESE POLITICIANS DID WANT WAS LEGALITY FOR THEIR PARTIES TO OPERATE IN SOME WAY IN POLITICS AND INCLUSION OF POLITICAL FIGURES IN THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT'S CONSIDERATION OF ITS RULE AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE FUTURE.

3. THERE SEEMED SOME AMBIGUITY IN THE POSITION OF THESE POLITICAL LEADERS WITH REGARD TO THE US ROLE IN SPEAKING OUT ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN ARGENTINA. SEVERAL SPEAKERS AFFIRMED THE NECESSITY OF OUR SPEAKING OUT AND, IN SOME RATHER DISTANT WAY AFFIRMED THAT THESE DECLARATIONS WOULD HAVE POSITIVE EFFECT UPON ARGENTINA'S LEADERS. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, THEY MADE CLEAR THAT IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR THE US TO APPEAR TO BE INTERVENING IN ARGENTINE AFFAIRS. US PRESSURE IN INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD NOT PRODUCE THE HUMAN RIGHTS IMPROVEMENT THE US DESIRES. US INTERFERENCE WITH LOANS TO ARGENTINA IN THE IFI'S WOULD ONLY HAMPER NEEDED ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT. MEANINGFUL CHANGES IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION HERE WOULD HAVE TO SPRING FROM ARGENTINE INITIATIVE.

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